

### Chapter highlights

- **Purpose:** This chapter explains the importance of developing a strong IT Procurement Project Team (PPT) with the right resources, the right skills and the time needed to complete the job.
- **Key points:**
  - The PPT should assemble as much knowledge as possible to ensure the best qualified supplier is selected.
  - PPT members/evaluators will be required to complete a Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Statement.

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### 13.0 Introduction

Utilizing a procurement project team (PPT) throughout the IT procurement process is an identified IT procurement best practice. Use of a PPT will help ensure:

- Project needs are addressed in a timely manner.
- Requisite project disciplines are represented.
- Resources, roles and responsibilities are identified and assigned up-front.
- The cumulative benefits of each team member's experience are maximized.
- A level playing field is maintained for all contending suppliers.
- Accountability and responsibility of the team members.
- Efficient use of everyone's time.

PPTs need the same widespread and diverse variety of skill sets as any other team. It is often a challenge to identify those persons with the right types of skill and experience when building the team. Selecting valuable members is particularly important when working with cross-functional teams. The procurement lead/sourcing specialist will work with the project's business owner to facilitate the development of this team, assign roles and responsibilities, and lead the team through the procurement process. More often than not, the PPT is the evaluation team; however, there may be instances where the composition of these teams will differ.

### 13.1 Selecting PPT members

The key to building a strong PPT is finding resources with the right skill sets and the time needed to complete the procurement project. These people should be stakeholders in the

final product or service and/or individuals who have knowledge and skills to fill a particular area of expertise or project discipline.

There are four main project skill sets or knowledge areas that the PPT should possess:

- Functional: expertise in the business needs of the project
- Technical: expertise in the IT or technical aspects of the project
- Financial: expertise in financial analysis of potential suppliers
- Contractual: IT expertise in development and review of the solicitation and contract documents

It is important to select team members who fully understand the needs of the public body acquiring the IT goods and/or services and the desired outcome of the procurement. The PPT should possess as much valuable knowledge as possible to ensure the best qualified supplier is selected. It is recommended that the PPT provide input into the solicitation document, especially the evaluation criteria. The team members should fully understand the requirements of the solicitation and must be able to critically read and evaluate responses.

Beyond covering the four major project skill sets, the following are important qualities to look for when considering members for your PPT:

- Strategic thinking ability to understand and conceptualize the potential improvement in an IT service area(s).
- IT project management and technical skills to convert strategic thought into practical plans for the project's total IT life-cycle.
- Understanding of the Commonwealth's and the public body's strategic IT objectives to foster those objectives and to deter potential short- and long-term conflicts.
- Risk assessment and mitigation skills to help reduce potential IT technical, schedule, cost, security, confidentiality, and/or contractual obstacles and issues.
- Procurement skills for the specialized complexity associated with IT acquisitions.
- Negotiation skills for IT products/services/solutions with the competency to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion.
- Enthusiasm and drive to see the project succeed.
- Objectivity to ensure that all proposals will be viewed equally based on their merits.

The PPT should be formed and functioning soon after the agency business need is identified. Input from all those responsible for significant aspects of the acquisition should be obtained as early in the process as possible. This is particularly important for procurements with critical time requirements. Early planning serves to shorten the acquisition process.

### **13.2 Defining roles and responsibilities**

The recommended size of a PPT is three to five members; however, some projects may require additional members due to the nature or complexity of the procurement. Coordination and management of the evaluation phase of the procurement process becomes more difficult as the size of the team increases. To avoid potential individual bias, the evaluation team should not be less than three members. There will be instances where the evaluation team is comprised of a different group of individuals than the PPT, due to the need for temporary subject matter experts or consultants or due to non-participation by a PPT member(s).

After the PPT is in place, the business owner and procurement lead/sourcing specialist will discuss the goals and business needs of the project with the team. The procurement lead/sourcing specialist describes the sourcing process and the roles and responsibilities of

the PPT and/or evaluation team members. Below is a table defining the roles and responsibilities of each member of the PPT:

Procurement role	Responsibilities
Agency procurement lead/sourcing specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop procurement plan methodology and framework.</li> <li>• Define and assign roles and responsibilities for the duration of the procurement process to each team member.</li> <li>• Be knowledgeable of the scope of work and the technical and business objectives of the project.</li> <li>• Act as single point of contact (SPOC) for the team; the evaluation team, (if different group), steering committee, if applicable; suppliers and procurement process oversight.</li> <li>• Participate with team in establishing well-defined evaluation criteria.</li> <li>• Participate with team to develop a clear, concise scoring plan.</li> <li>• Choose best contract type for project success.</li> <li>• Obtain and maintain all confidentiality and conflict of interest statements from team members, SMEs and evaluation team, if different group.</li> <li>• Prepare RFI/RFP/solicitation documents using approved templates.</li> <li>• Preside over any pre-bid/proposal conferences when necessary.</li> <li>• Post documents and respond to supplier questions.</li> <li>• Obtain clarification of supplier's proposals if necessary.</li> <li>• Along with team, participate in supplier product demonstrations and oral presentations.</li> <li>• Provide and maintain control of the cost and price information from bidders/proposers.</li> <li>• Participate in and lead proposal evaluations and contract negotiations.</li> <li>• Serve as chairperson of evaluation team.</li> <li>• Review and approve evaluation recommendation.</li> <li>• Help tailor the contract to the unique needs of the project.</li> <li>• Protect and manage the integrity of the project and the ability to get work done.</li> <li>• Protect and manage the relationship with potential suppliers.</li> <li>• Ensure the overall integrity of the procurement process through fair and open competition.</li> <li>• Coordinate legal and/or CIO review and approval of procurement documentation required before release/execution.</li> <li>• Distribute and receive Evaluation Team Survey forms.</li> </ul>
Business owner/customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define requirements.</li> <li>• Define budget, requested timeline and other possible constraints.</li> <li>• Define conditions of performance satisfaction and final acceptance.</li> <li>• Identify business needs such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ demonstrations</li> <li>○ bonding/acceptance testing</li> <li>○ service levels</li> <li>○ milestones/payment terms</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Supports negotiations to ensure that final contract supports business requirements.</li> <li>• Serves on evaluation team to evaluate the supplier responses.</li> <li>• Coordinate VITA PMD participation and APR approval process.</li> </ul>
Subject matter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must possess expert technical, industry-, commodity- or service-</li> </ul>

expert (SME)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>specific competence and/or knowledge for the project.</li> <li>May be a member of team or a resource to the team.</li> </ul>
External consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External consultant technical, industry-, commodity- or service-specific competence and/or knowledge not available from an internal resource.</li> <li>Provides advice or assistance to sourcing team members.</li> <li>Functions as a non-voting resource to the PPT.</li> <li>Prohibited from benefiting from outcome of any award.</li> </ul>
Evaluation team members (may be same as PPT members)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individuals designated/responsible to make award recommendation.</li> <li>The PPT/evaluation team would typically include a representative from the business owner, subject matter expert(s) and be led by SPOC.</li> <li>Each member participates to provide business, legal, technical and financial input.</li> </ul>
Single point of contact (SPOC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agency procurement lead/sourcing specialist serves this role. (See role responsibilities above.)</li> <li>Is the designated resource for communications with suppliers and all others during the solicitation process.</li> </ul>

The SPOC, business owner and technical SMEs will work together to create evaluation criteria based on the Commonwealth's or agency's business needs. The evaluation criterion allows the PPT to collect the necessary data to evaluate the suppliers' proposals. For example, evaluation criteria might include factors such as total cost of ownership, quality of goods or service, performance history of suppliers, risk assessment, availability and level of technical support. For more in-depth discussion of this, refer to chapter 24 of this manual, Requests for Proposals [\(insert link\)](#).

PPT/evaluation members are requested to complete and submit the survey in Appendix B at the close of each procurement where an evaluation was conducted. The SPOC should provide members with the survey form and submission details. VITA SCM is collecting and sharing lessons learned. Commonwealth IT procurement professionals and project managers may contact [scminfo@vita.virginia.gov](mailto:scminfo@vita.virginia.gov) if interested in obtaining and/or sharing evaluation team lessons learned.

### 13.3 Confidentiality

The PPT and/or evaluation team have planning and source selection sensitive information and supplier proposal information that must be marked and treated confidentially and must not be released outside the PPT/evaluation team. It is imperative that all members of the PPT and/or evaluation team fully understand they must not disclose any such confidential information to any person not authorized to receive the information nor to any person who has not signed a confidentiality and conflict of interest statement. Generally, only the team members and certain selected personnel with a need to know have access to the procurement information. All information and documentation relative to the development of a specification or requirements document, the solicitation documents and the contractual documents will be deemed confidential in nature until a contract is awarded.

PPT members/evaluators and anyone given access rights to the confidential information will be required to complete a confidentiality and conflict of interest statement (see Appendix A). The SPOC is responsible for obtaining and maintaining all signed agreements. All PPT members/evaluators must agree to the following:

- Agrees that no gift, benefit, gratuity, or consideration will be accepted or a personal or financial interest in a party who is bidding or proposing or associated with a

bidder/proposer initiated on a project or procurement. (Refer to chapter 5 of this manual, Ethics in Public Procurement [\(insert link\)](#)).

- Certifies that all information concerning the planning, processes, development or procedures of the project or procurement will be kept confidential and secure.
- Certifies that no copy or disclosure of info will be made to any other party who has not signed a copy of this confidentiality agreement.
- Understands that the information to be kept confidential includes specifications, administrative requirements, contractual terms and conditions and includes concepts and discussions as well as written and electronic materials.
- Understands that if he/she leaves the procurement team before a contract is awarded that all information must still be kept confidential.
- Agrees that any instructions provided by the sourcing specialist relating to the confidentiality of information will be strictly followed.
- Agrees to immediately advise the SPOC in the event that he/she learns or has reason to believe that any person who has access to confidential procurement information has or intends to disclose that information in violation of their agreement.
- Certifies that he/she has no personal or financial interest and no present or past employment or activity which would be incompatible with participation in any activity related to the planning or procurement processes for the procurement.

**Appendix A**  
**Procurement Project/Evaluation Team Confidentiality**  
**and Conflict of Interest Statement**

[Project Name/Solicitation #]

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name clearly), hereby certify that I have provided all required information on this form to the best of my knowledge and agree to the following confidentiality and conflict of interest protocols for the subject project/solicitation. I further certify that I have read and understand the attached Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Guidelines.

For the purpose of these Statements, "Supplier" means any business entity/corporation/organization/firm/individual including any of its Affiliates (i.e., an entity that controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with Supplier) that submits an offer/proposal in response to this solicitation. "Supplier" also means "Offeror" or "Bidder."

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**PART A - CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT**

1. I understand that information related to this project/solicitation and all proposals received shall be held in strict confidence.
2. I will not divulge any information pertaining to this project/solicitation or program, including but not limited to specific proposals, the number of proposals received and under review, or any other related documents.
3. I will cease communicating with Suppliers associated with this project/solicitation until Notice of Award is posted for this procurement.
4. I will limit all communication about or pertaining to this solicitation to only those individuals who have signed a Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Statement for this solicitation/project. I will confirm this with this project's single point of contact (SPOC), identified as: \_\_\_\_\_ (provide SPOC name/e-mail address) prior to entering into any such communication.
5. My contact with the Suppliers will adhere to the communications protocol set forth in the RFP, which designates a SPOC for all supplier communication.
6. I agree not to meet with any potential or actual Supplier for any reason, without at least one other team member and the consent of the SPOC. I will not discuss the active procurement with a potential or actual Supplier.
7. If contacted by a potential or actual Supplier, I will refer the Supplier to the SPOC.
8. If I am contacted by any potential Supplier under the Freedom of Information Act, such requests will be forwarded to the SPOC immediately upon receipt.
9. I have read the provisions of the law identified in [Article 6](#) of the Virginia Public Procurement Act and subsection [2.2-4342](#), § D, entitled "Public inspection of certain records" and [2.2-4359](#), § D, delineated below:  
(a) [2.2-4342 D](#). *Any competitive negotiation Supplier, upon request, shall be afforded the opportunity to inspect proposal records within a reasonable time after the evaluation and negotiations of proposals are completed but prior to award, except in the event that the public body decides not to accept any of the proposals and to reopen the contract.*

*Otherwise, proposal records shall be open to public inspection only after award of the contract.*

(b) 2.2-4359 D. *Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to require a public body, when procuring by competitive negotiation, to furnish a statement of the reasons why a particular proposal was not deemed to be the most advantageous.*

10. I will inform the SPOC of any concerns regarding inappropriate communication or any suspected breach of confidentiality.

*END OF PART A – CONTINUE TO PART B*

## **PART B – CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT**

1. I am not a director, officer, owner, partner, trustee, consultant or employee of any Supplier that has submitted a proposal/offer in response to this solicitation or of any Supplier that has expressed interest in bidding or being a subcontractor for this project.
2. Neither I, nor any member of my immediate family, including spouse, parents, children or siblings, have any direct investment, such as stocks or bonds, in any Supplier that has submitted a proposal/offer in response to this solicitation or any Supplier that has expressed interest in bidding or being a subcontractor for this project.
3. I have not received any income from, and I have not received any promise of income from, any Supplier that has submitted a proposal/offer in response to this solicitation or any Supplier that has expressed interest in bidding or being a subcontractor for this project in the twelve months preceding the date of execution of this Statement.
4. As of the date of execution of this Statement, I am not aware that any Supplier that has submitted a proposal/offer in response to this solicitation or any Supplier that has expressed interest in bidding or being a subcontractor for this project will give me income in the next twenty-four (24) months following the date of execution of this Statement.

OR—

I am disclosing the following interests in a Supplier that has submitted a proposal/offer in response to this solicitation or a Supplier that has expressed interest in bidding or being a subcontractor for this project:

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5. I agree to inform the SPOC immediately if there is a change in regards to my answers to paragraphs 1 through 4 of this Conflict of Interest Statement.
6. I agree to inform the SPOC of any concerns regarding any suspected breach of this Conflict of Interest Statement by other members of the solicitation/project team.

**BY SIGNING BELOW, I ACKNOWLEDGE THE INFORMATION AND CERTIFICATIONS I HAVE GIVEN IN PART A AND PART B OF THIS STATEMENT:**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

If Consultant, provide name of Company you represent and your role on this team:

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*END OF PART B – CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE, PART C  
YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR READING AND UNDERSTANDING THE FOLLOWING  
GUIDELINES AND HAVE SIGNED THIS STATEMENT TO THAT EFFECT.*

## **PART C - CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST GUIDELINES**

### **Confidentiality**

For purposes of these guidelines, confidential data or information is to be broadly construed and includes:

1. all trade secrets and proprietary information so designated and submitted by Suppliers in their proposals/offers;
2. cost estimates;
3. any and all other data and/or information that discloses any aspect of the substance or detail of a proposal itself or the evaluation/scoring thereof, whether conveyed in writing or orally and any and all information derived therefrom.

Certain documents or section of the proposal responses may be protected from public view under the provision of the Virginia Public Procurement Act [§2.2-4342](#). The proprietary/confidential status must be maintained even after the evaluation process is complete.

Trade secrets or proprietary information must have FOIA protections invoked by the Supplier in writing identifying specific data or materials to be protected and state the reasons why protection is necessary. (Entire proposal, line item prices, and/or total proposal prices as proprietary or trade secrets is not acceptable and will result in rejection of the proposals.)

All state government procurements for goods and services must be conducted in a fair and impartial manner with avoidance of any impropriety or appearance of impropriety. All state employees having official responsibility for the procurement process shall conduct business above reproach in every respect. All third-party contractors/consultants participating in an IV&V and/or Subject Matter expert capacity in this project/solicitation shall conduct their participation above reproach in every respect.

Each Procurement Project/Evaluation Team Member involved in this project/solicitation must take all reasonable steps to ensure that others do not have unauthorized access to confidential data or information relating to such project/solicitation. Such steps include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Team members, without exception, should forward to the SPOC any and all inquiries or comments regarding any procurement transaction that are received from any party, either internal or external to VITA. In addition, team members should explain to the party making such inquiry that the reason the inquiry is being forwarded to the SPOC is to ensure that the party receives the most up-to-date and accurate information available regarding the procurement process.
2. The confidential data or any information acquired or accessed in connection with this project/solicitation should not be used except for the purpose of evaluating Suppliers'



proposals/offers. Furthermore, do not release, disseminate or otherwise disclose such data or information to any other party unless authorized by applicable law or required by court order to do so. If so authorized by applicable law or required by court order, notify the SPOC who is responsible for such disclosure.

3. The data and information contained in Suppliers' proposals/offers and any information derived therefrom (including working papers) shall, at all times, be used, maintained, transported and stored in a secure fashion unless the Procurement Project/Evaluation Team Member is actively using such data or information.
4. The data and information contained in Suppliers' proposals/offers and any information derived therefrom (including working papers) shall not be left unattended on conference room tables during meeting breaks unless the meeting room is locked and shall not be left unattended in office chairs, under desks or in any other place unless the room is locked.
5. The confidential data and information contained in Suppliers' proposals/offers, any and all oral discussion or comment relating to the confidential data and information and any information derived therefrom shall be maintained in the strictest confidence and shall not be released, sold, disseminated, transferred or otherwise disclosed by any means to any person, firm, corporation, or third party without the prior written approval of the SPOC.
6. No emails shall be sent to any person(s) regarding the data or information contained in Suppliers' proposals/offers or any information derived therefrom without the prior written approval of the SPOC.
7. The data and information contained in offerors' proposals/offers and any information derived therefrom shall be accessed and used only as necessary to evaluate Suppliers' proposals. The data and information contained in offerors' proposals and any information derived therefrom shall be used and/or accessed for no other reason and in no other way.
8. The data and information contained in Suppliers' proposals/offers and any information derived therefrom shall not be reproduced or copied by any means, in whole or in part, without the prior written approval of the SPOC.
9. For any procurement conducted by VITA, the entire procurement file shall be maintained by and kept in the designated VITA Contracts Administration location.
10. Upon request or when the Procurement Project/Evaluation Team Member's assigned duties associated with this project/solicitation are completed, the team member shall immediately deliver to the SPOC all Suppliers' proposals/offers along with all copies of any other materials and/or writings received or created in connection with or otherwise relating to this project/solicitation and any information derived therefrom.
11. When a Procurement Project/Evaluation Team Member has reason to believe that any unauthorized person(s) or third party has obtained or been provided access to or used data or information contained in Suppliers' proposals/offers or any information derived therefrom, such team Member shall notify the SPOC by telephone, email or facsimile transmission within two (2) business hours. In addition, such team Member will provide any and all documentation or other information requested by VITA pertaining to such

unauthorized access or use of information or data and cooperate fully with VITA during its investigation of the matter.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Each Procurement Project/Evaluation Team Member should be acquainted with the *Code of Virginia*, [§ 2.2-4367](#), which includes *State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act* ([§ 2.2-3100 et seq.](#)), the *Virginia Governmental Frauds Act* ([§ 18.2-498.1 et seq.](#)), Articles 2 ([§ 18.2-438 et seq.](#)) and 3 ([§ 18.2-446 et seq.](#)) of Chapter 10 of Title 18.2. and Article 6 ([§ 2.2-4368](#) through [2.2-4371](#)). Once the Project Procurement/Evaluation Team Member has read the referenced *Virginia Code* sections above, if the team Member concludes that a conflict of interest exists in relation to this project/solicitation, the Member must inform the SPOC immediately and excuse themselves as a participant.

## Appendix B

### Evaluation Team Survey

Supply Chain Management is constantly looking for ways to refine our processes and deliver the best experience and results. Please assist us by taking a few moments to respond to the following statements by circling the number you feel most appropriately reflects your concurrence and e-mail the completed questionnaire to your project's SPOC. Delegated agencies should send their surveys to: [scminfo@vita.virginia.gov](mailto:scminfo@vita.virginia.gov).

SCM communicated your role and responsibilities as an Evaluation Team member effectively.	Agree	5	4	3	2	Disagree	1
Comments:							

SCM provided clear instructions on how to evaluate proposals.	Agree	5	4	3	2	Disagree	1
Comments:							

SCM provided clear expectations with regard to timelines and time commitments.	Agree	5	4	3	2	Disagree	1
Comments:							

The requirements were structured in a way that solicited the information needed to select the best solution to meet the scope.	Agree	5	4	3	2	Disagree	1
Comments:							

The evaluation criteria and associated weightings accurately reflected the Commonwealth's requirements and their relative importance in selecting the best-value solution.	Agree	5	4	3	2	Disagree	1
Comments:							

The evaluation team had the right mix of people and expertise to encompass all of the areas needed to make an informed decision.	Agree	5	4	3	2	Disagree	1
Comments:							

The evaluation process was run effectively and met my expectations.	Agree	5	4	3	2	Disagree	1
Comments:							

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